

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 34, with the following amended paragraph:

End edge 16 is split into sections (end areas) 16a and 16b separated by a space 17. The space 17 is defined on one side by edge 18 which is contiguous with end edge section 16a. The other side of space 17 is defined by a rounded hook 19. A slit 21 is formed in the material 11 adjacent space 17 near edge 18 and sized to receive and hold hood 19. A triangular gusset 22 is formed below space 17 by a score line 23 which extends from edge 18 to a point 26, and a score line 24 which extends from hook 19 to point 26. The gusset 22 extends longitudinally from space 17 toward end edge 14.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 8, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring also to Fig. 2, the plate blank 10 is configured into a utensil (food plate) 31 by inserting hook 19 into slit 21, causing material 11 from end area 16a and end area 16b on either side of space 17 to overlap. By overlapping material 11 ~~on~~ from either side of space 17, ~~the plate blank 10~~ is stressed, causing the material 11 to bow both longitudinally and laterally as more fully described below.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 13, with the following amended paragraph:

The hook 19 and slit 21 are a very advantageous mechanical device for locking the blank 10 in a stressed overlapping configuration to form plate 31.

The advantages are that the hook 19 and slit 21 are formed from, and are an integral part of, the same material as the ~~plate 31~~ blank 10 itself, requiring no additional elements to be affixed to the material 11. The mechanical means for holding the blank 10 in a stressed overlapping configuration to form plate 31 are not, however, limited to the hook 19 and slit 21 illustrated. Because, in one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plate 31 will be reconfigured back to its flat condition, as shown in Fig. 1, it is desirable that the means for maintaining the material 11 configured into plate 31 be easily reversible. This is well provided by the hook 19 and slit 21 illustrated. ~~Other devices that can serve this purpose include hook and loop fasteners (sold under the trademark VELCRO), snaps, buttons, loop and hook, or any other mechanical means well known in the art for releasably holding two elements together.~~ It will be equally evident to those skilled in the art that the actual shape of the hook 19 could vary from that illustrated and still perform the function described.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 30, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring also to Figures 3, 4 and 5, when the ~~hook 19 is inserted and held in slit 21~~ material from end areas 16a and 16b are held in an overlapping configuration, the material 11 is automatically caused to flex. By having the space 17 and gusset 22 located approximately midway between side edges 12 and 13, the flex of material 11 produces both a lateral bow 32 and a longitudinal bow 33. The lateral bow 32 extends from side 12 to side 13, nearer to end edge 16 than edge 14, with its low point (apex) 34 approximately midway

between the side edges 12 and 13. The longitudinal bow 33 extends from end edge 16 to between one quarter and three quarters of the distance to end edge 14, with its low point (apex) 34 at the approximate midpoint of longitudinal bow 33. Together, the lateral bow 32 and longitudinal bow 33 form a concave generally conical-shaped food-holding area 36 in the area of plate 31 nearer to end edge 16. Between food-holding area 36 and end edge 14 is a beverage-holding area 37 which remains essentially flat after the blank 10 is configured into plate 31. The bows 32 and 33 pre-stress the generally flat container-holding area 37 enabling it to support the weight of a glass container (for example) filled with fluid.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 11, with the following amended paragraph:

The triangular-shaped gusset 22 extends into the general area of the food-holding area 36. As best seen with reference to Figs. 7A-7C, before the blank 10 is configured into plate 31, the gusset 22 fills a triangular space between score lines 23 and 24. As the hook 19 is drawn toward slit 21, the gusset 22 rotates about line 22 until the gusset overlays the material 11 and score lines 23 and 24 have reversed relative positions. In this way, the distance between side edges 12 and 13 in the area of gusset 22 is reduced, causing the bows 32 and 33 in the material 11 as previously described. The gusset assures that the material in the concave food-holding area 36 is continuous and thereby prevents fluids that might accumulate in the food-holding area from leaking out the bottom of the plate. Where such leakage is not a consideration

(such as when only dry materials are to be used), the gusset 22 can be eliminated and the space between score lines 23 and 24 left open, forming one space with space 17.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 34, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to Fig. 8, a hole 48 is provided in plate 31 in the generally flat beverage-holding area 37 near the end edge 14 and preferably (but not necessarily) off to one side. The hole 48 is sized to receive a tapered container 47 (e.g., a drinking vessel made of glass or plastic or paper) and permit a portion of the container 47 to pass below the plate 31 before engaging and holding it somewhere between its top 47a and its bottom 47b. By allowing a portion of the container 47 to rest below plate 31 (rather than simply be balanced on top in a recess), the possibility of the container 47 falling off the plate is eliminated. While the container 47 has been referred to as a beverage container, it will occur to those skilled in the art that the container 47 can also serve to hold a snack, such as nuts or chips or a sauce or any other food or condiment that might be desired to have handy. When it is desired to provide for holding both a container 47 for a beverage and a second container for a sauce or condiment, a second hole 50 is provided. Because the generally flat container-holding area 37 is pre-stressed by the bows 32 and 33, the contents of the container 47 and/or a container (not shown) in hole 50 are securely supported even though the weight of the containers and their contents is applied at the cantilevered area 37. It is advantageous to have the food-

holding area 36 nearer to the hand 44 than the container-holding area 37 so that it is not necessary to reach over the container 47 to gain access to food in food-holding area 36.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 27, with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to Figs. 4 and 8, an arcuate score line 51 is provided spaced-apart from but adjacent end edge 14 which permits an end edge 14 to be folded down about the score line 51, forming a foot 52. The score line 51 is spaced from end edge 14 a distance such that when end edge 14 is bent down to form foot 52, the end edge 14 is at approximately the same level as the low point (apex) 34 of intersecting bows 32 and 33. When placed on a longitudinal surface 40, the apex 34 and end edge 14 are in the same longitudinal plane whereby the food-holding area 36 remains generally horizontal so as not to spill its contents. In addition, the area 37 between the low point 34 and foot 52 is elevated above the horizontal surface 40 so as to keep the container 47 engaged.